

Newsday

explore **LI**

HEIGHTENED EXPERIENCE

INTERACT WITH
GIRAFFES
AND OTHER
COOL ANIMALS
AT LI FARMS

B4

ENTER, SAND FANS Hit the 'beach' at a new indoor volleyball facility newsday.com/family



RANDEE DADDONA

Ron Brigati, manager at White Post Farms in Melville, visits Oliver the giraffe. Visitors to the Giraffe Experience stand on a platform that allows them to feed the grown-up giraffes.

LI FARM ADVENTURES

From giraffe gazing to beekeeping, cool experiences for families this fall

BY BETH WHITEHOUSE

beth.whitehouse@newsday.com

Baby Savanna impressed Hana Hoti, 8, of Great Neck with her precociousness. “She was just born and she already knows how to walk,” Hana says.

Savanna, born on Aug. 13 at White Post Farms in Melville, is a baby giraffe named for the African plains. Savanna and

her parents, Patches and Oliver, are the stars of White Post Farm’s Giraffe Experience, a new, enormous, enclosed and

heated building that lets visitors come inside and look down on the long-necked family.

Visitors stand on a platform, and the grown-up giraffes are tall enough — more than 12 feet — to reach their heads so visitors can feed them raw carrots that the farm provides for free. “It was so cool how they come up and you feed them and pet them. It licked my finger, and the tongue feels like sandpaper,” says Hana’s older brother, Ari, 9, on a recent visit.

Savanna is still too “short”

for her neck to reach that high; she’s only 7 feet tall but will keep growing. During the spring and summer, when the weather improves, the giraffes will be able to wander an adjacent outdoor area.

Savanna isn’t the only newcomer to White Post Farms. Two ostriches have also arrived, taking over the former outdoor giraffe enclosure now that Patches, Oliver and Savanna have moved to new digs. “We’ve never had ostriches before,” says Susan Dorsey, social media manager for the farm. “They’re pretty

funny to watch, the way their necks move.”

Also happening every Saturday and Sunday before Thanksgiving — magic shows in the new stage building, included with farm admission, says Ron Brigati, White Post manager.

Brigati says one advantage to visiting White Post in November: Fewer crowds to compete with.

ON THE COVER Patches and her baby Savanna, stars of the Giraffe Experience at White Post Farms in Melville.

The Giraffe Experience

WHEN | WHERE Daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (stay until 6 p.m.) through Nov. 20 at White Post Farms, 250 Old Country Rd., Melville
COST Included with farm admission of \$28.95 per person, 15 months and younger get in free
INFO 631-351-9373, whitepostfarms.com

Can't make it to see the giraffes before Thanksgiving? Don't worry: Still to come for the holiday season is a Santa giraffe encounter, Brigati promises. It will have Santa surrounded by giraffe-themed holiday decorations, such as a fake giraffe adding an ornament to a holiday tree.

MORE NOVEMBER FARM EXPERIENCES

BEEKEEPING

WHEN | WHERE At Organics Today Farm, 169 Washington St., East Islip, 631-480-6497, organics todayfarms.com.

COST is \$10 per person with a minimum of 10 people, or \$100 for a class with a smaller number of people.

"We demonstrate what the hives look like inside. We show the students the honeycomb and we tell them the



An ostrich at White Post Farms — one of two new arrivals — watches some of the visitors.

different roles and functions of the honeybees — male, female, queen, scout bees, robber bees and guard bees," says Organics Today Farm owner Michael Massino. "We discuss what actually goes on inside the hive throughout the year." Participants will walk out to the hives and stay at a safe dis-

tance while Massino approaches the farm's three hives and their 90,000 bees. The hourlong classes are offered on demand throughout November; call the farm to schedule.

THERE'S MORE The farm also offers a class called Field Trips — participants venture into the farm's fields

for a 90-minute walking tour of the organic operation. They'll see the farm's compost area, solar power, green house, crops and beneficial insects. Cost is \$10 per person with a minimum of 10 people or \$100 for a class with a smaller number of people; call the farm to schedule.

FALL SATURDAYS

WHEN | WHERE At Hallockville Museum Farm, 6038 Sound Ave., Riverhead, 631-298-5292, hallockville.org. For ages 5 to 12.

COST \$75 per child.

This Saturday is the last in the Hallockville Museum Farm's Fall Saturdays program for kids, which runs from 9 a.m. to noon. "They work with the animals and work in the garden," says Roberta Shoten, executive director. "There are still carrots and potatoes and root vegetables this time of year." Advance registration is required.

THERE'S MORE Children at least 10 years of age can accompany a grown-up to a Log Cabin Pillow class from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday. Participants will learn to hand stitch a traditional log cabin variation block that will become a pillow, taught by Connie Klos. "She's one of our most crafty and creative board members," Shoten says. Fabric is included in the \$65-per-person fee, but participants need to bring their own sewing kit with items such as needles and thread, scissors and thimble. Advance registration is required.



A family of three giraffes — Savanna, Patches and Oliver — share an enclosure for the new Giraffe Experience at White Post Farms.